

Eph. 4:25-32 “Talk the Walk”

For the Children: People have different ways of talking. How they talk may depend on where they are from – NZ, Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, etc. It may reflect the way their parents speak at home, how much schooling they have done or what kind of job they have: a truck-driver will often speak differently than a doctor. And it may reflect what they *believe*: Those who know the Lord will not want to take His Name in vain, use bad language or cause harm to others. We will want to speak in a way that reflects our love of God, our desire to obey His commandments and to show love to others who are made in His image. **Questions:** What are some of the wrong ways of speaking that we sometimes find in ourselves, even though we are God’s children? How can our speech help others? How does the devil use ungodly speech to cause trouble?

Introduction:

First Point: The Way We Talk

- 1) Truthful Speech: Walking in truth leads to speaking truth, instead of falsehood, slander, empty nonsense or worldly chatter. See the 9th commandment.
- 2) Controlled Speech: It is right to be angry with sin, with holy anger. However, in our anger we are not to give way to sin e.g., by losing self-control, speaking insults, or harbouring hateful feelings. See LD 40. We are also warned against bottling up the anger, instead of seeking reconciliation. For this can lead to bitterness or other harmful attitudes.
- 3) Working Not Stealing: We are to share with those in need, rather than stealing. This means that we must also work diligently in order to have the means to help the needy, rather than forcing others to support us e.g., for laziness. This is obviously outside of the “talk” theme.
- 4) Edifying Speech: Our speech should give grace to the hearer, to build up, rather than to damage with that which is “unwholesome” (“rotten”). Rotten speech is that which encourages others to think, speak or act against God’s commandments. See Jam. 3:1-12.
- 5) Kind Speech: Being kind (v. 32) involves our speech, though it also applies to thoughts and deeds. Unkind speech includes “clamour” (shouting at others), insulting them or slandering them due to bitterness, rage or malice. Kindness is associated with compassion and pity and a forgiving attitude. The language here urges us to have a “good spleen,” resulting in a good temperament.

Second Point: The Reason We Talk This Way

- 1) Members of One Another: We are united to one another in Christ. Therefore, what harms one member harms the body of Christ and harms us all.
- 2) Opportunities for the Devil: Harmful speech may tempt others to react in a sinful way. It may also lead to other sins within the speaker. The devil may use this to cause divisions in the body. The devil is adept at capitalizing on harmful speech.
- 3) Opportunities for Grace: Godly speech provides an opportunity to build up others in the faith and thus to build up the whole body. It can also give a good witness to unbelievers.
- 4) Grieving the Spirit: The believer has God’s seal of ownership permanently placed upon him (v. 30). However, the Spirit who indwells us is displeased when we think, speak or act sinfully. “Grieving” the Lord should be something God’s people wish to avoid!
- 5) Reflecting the Lord Jesus: We have been shown great mercy by God. He has forgiven us much for the sake of His Son and because of Christ’s work on the cross. If we love and value this mercy, we should want to reflect it, by being ready to forgive others who sin against us; and by speaking in such a way as to edify others, because we love our neighbour – and especially our brethren.

Conclusion:

